

# **Agency Use of the Commonwealth Data Standards Catalog**

**Virginia Information Technologies Agency  
Enterprise Applications Division  
Data Management Group**

**DRAFT  
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### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define how state agencies will use the Commonwealth Data Standards Catalog. The Data Standards Catalog is a central location for documenting data standards *In Draft*, *Under Review*, or *Approved* by the Commonwealth Information Technology Investment Board (ITIB).

### What is a Data Standard?

When a data standard is in the form of a data model, it will contain both high level concepts and a myriad of details. Which parts of the model are binding upon agencies within the Commonwealth and where is their freedom?

A data standard states, that based upon extensive research and discussion, if an application is going to support all the data that the Commonwealth of Virginia (COV) needs in a given subject area, then it must include all of the data in the model. The standard model, over time, should come to represent all the data which is needed by any agency. The model as a standard does not say that every agency must carry all data in the model. Agencies only need to maintain the data they need. It does say that if an agency maintains data in the model, the data should be designed consistent with the model.

Each data standard will contain a data model and a corresponding guidance document (e.g. a business narrative written by the Community of Interest (COI) describing the scope of the standard, requirements, policy implications and implementation guidance).

The Data Management Group and COIs are available to assist agencies with their understanding, interpretation and implementation of the data standard. Requests can be made to the [ea@vita.virginia.gov](mailto:ea@vita.virginia.gov) mailbox or contact a member of the Data Management Team or COI directly.

The Commonwealth Data Standards Catalog can be found on the VITA website at <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/oversight/default.aspx?id=10344>

### Types of Data Standards

There are two types of data standards in the catalog– internal and external.

An internal COV data standard is developed by a Commonwealth of Virginia agency or group of agencies that make up a Community of Interest (COI). The Procurement Vendor data standard is an example of an internal COV data standard; it is being developed by the Department of General Services Division of Purchases and Supply (DGS DPS), Department of Accounts (DOA) and VITA's Supply Chain Management Division (VITA SCM). It defines the data COV will manage about procurement vendors.

In contrast, an external data standard is developed and maintained by a national, federal or industry organization with input from business experts. External standards will include varying levels of detail and may be farther reaching than the COV internal data standards. For example, the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) includes many data exchange standards in use by state and federal agencies working on global justice and homeland security. Also, the federal government and industry experts continue to work on refining data standards and formats for health information exchanges.

### Scope of Catalog Content and Use

- In the near term, the Commonwealth's priority will be to develop and/or adopt data standards for our enterprise data.  
*Enterprise data is defined as data that is collected by two or more state agencies or shared between state or other entities (local government, federal government and other states). Some examples of enterprise data are: Employee, Citizen, Expenditure and Vendor.*
- Executive branch agencies will follow the approved Commonwealth data standards.
- The expectation is to implement the approved data standards as state agencies move forward with application upgrades, modernization efforts and/or development of new data exchanges.
- Agencies will be responsible for developing migration strategies for the future implementation of approved Commonwealth data standards.
- Agencies will review the Data Standards Catalog when developing plans for new information technology to determine if the existing standards apply to the project.
- Agencies will be accountable to work with the VITA Data Management Group to develop and/or identify external data standards for their domain of expertise (e.g. Finance, Licensing, etc.). Typically data standards will be developed or external standards introduced as part of new application development projects or enterprise data exchanges.
- The timing of all these efforts will be determined based upon the Commonwealth's priorities. Those priorities will be determined through a TBD governance structure.

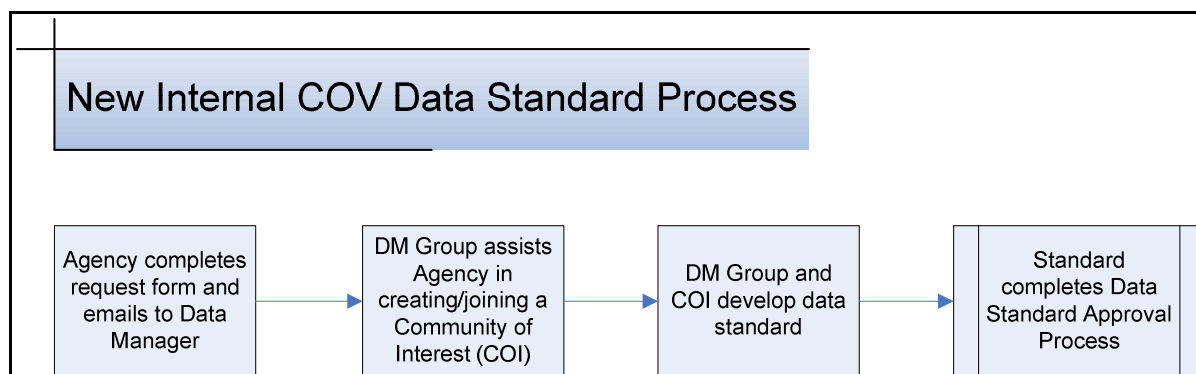
### Process Flows

The following "how to" processes are described in the remaining section of this document.

1. Request a New Internal Data Standard
2. Data Standards Approval Process
3. Request a New External Data Standard
4. Request to change an Existing Data Standard
5. Request an Exception to a Data Standard

### **Request a New Internal Data Standard**

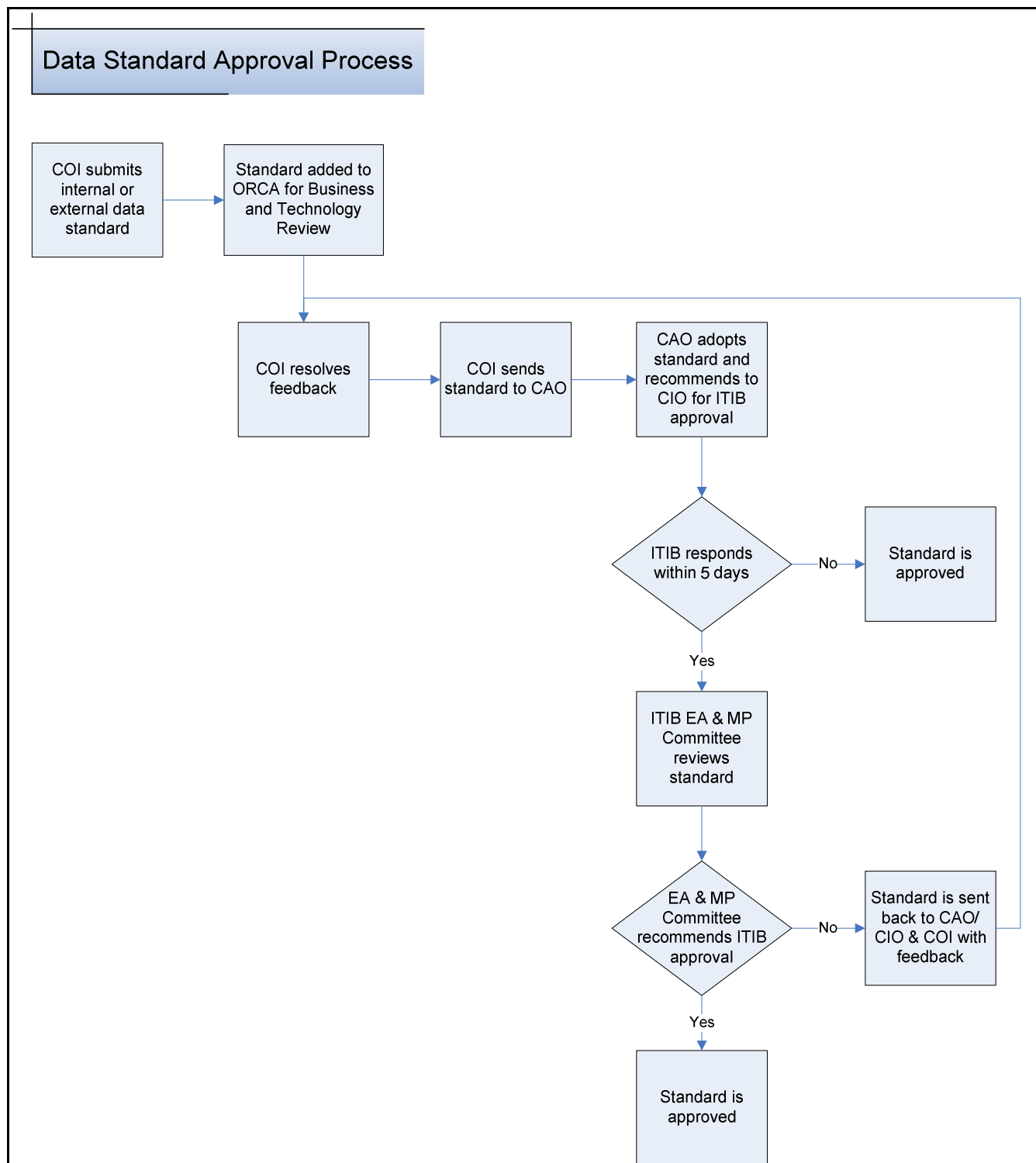
If an agency determines a new internal COV data standard is warranted, the agency should fill out the New/Changed Data Standard Request form and email it to the Data Manager in the VITA Data Management Group. Once the project has been approved, the Data Management Group will help facilitate the data standards creation process by suggesting other agencies to be in the Community of Interest (COI) for the standard or recommending an existing COI that would be interested in the new standard, answering questions about the Data Standardization Process, and providing data standard development expertise. Once the standard has been validated as complete by the COI, it will follow the data standard approval process.



### **Data Standard Approval Process**

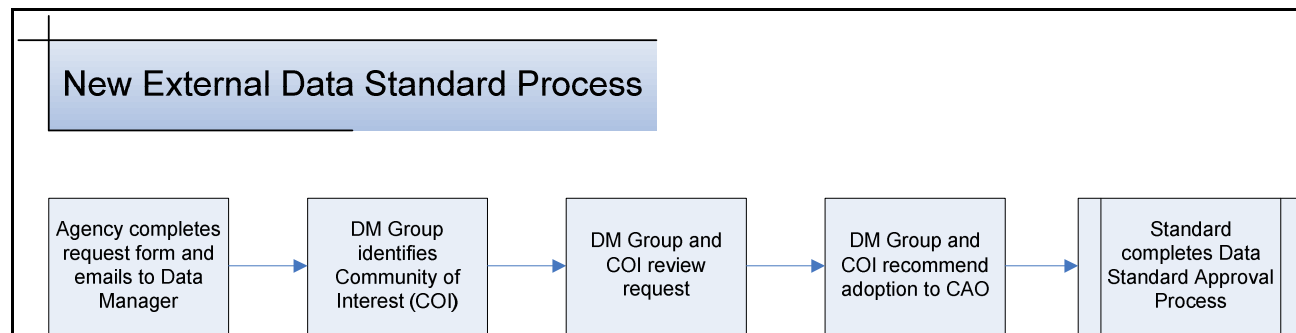
Once the Community of Interest (COI) has drafted the data standard and reviewed it with stakeholders and the Data Management Group, the data standard will be added to the VITA Online Review and Comment Application (ORCA) for business and technology review. After the review period ends, the COI sends the data standard to the Chief Applications Officer (CAO). The CAO will review the data standard, adopt it, and recommend to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) that the Information Technology Investment Board (ITIB) should approve the data standard.

Once the CIO sends the data standard to the ITIB, the ITIB has five (5) days to respond with a request for review. If there is no response, the data standard is approved as adopted by the CAO. If the ITIB responds, the Enterprise Applications and Major Projects Committee (EA&MP) of the ITIB will review the data standard. The standard may be approved if the EA&MP Committee recommends it to the ITIB. If the EA&MP does not recommend approval, the data standard will be sent back to the CIO, CAO, and COI with feedback. COI will review the feedback and determine next steps for the data standard.



### **Request a New External Data Standard**

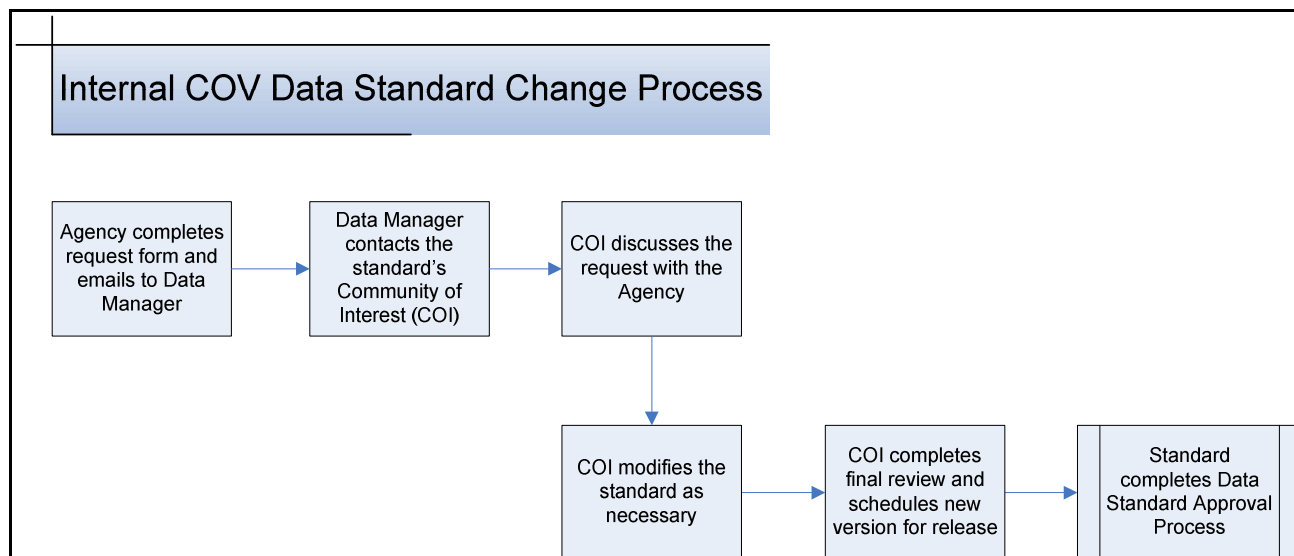
If an agency wishes for an external data standard to be adopted by the Commonwealth, the agency should fill out the New/Changed Data Standard Request form and email it to the Data Manager. The Data Management Group will assign/create a Community of Interest (COI) for the request. The Data Management Group and COI will review the request, request clarification if necessary from the agency and make a recommendation to the Chief Applications Officer (CAO). If recommended for adoption, the standard will then follow the data standard approval process.



### **Request a Change to an Existing Data Standard**

If an agency believes a change is needed to an internal COV data standard, the agency should fill out the New/Changed Data Standard Request form and email it to the Data Manager.

The Data Manager will contact the Community of Interest (COI) that developed the standard. The COI will review the submitted change request with the requestor to understand why the change is needed. If the COI agrees with the request, they will make the necessary changes to the data standard, review the final decisions and schedule the new version of the data standard for release. The modified standard will then follow the data standard approval process.



### **Request an Exception to an Existing Data Standard**

If an agency believes it cannot align to an approved data standard, it should complete the Data Standard Exception form and submit it to the Data Manager.

The Data Manager will contact the Community of Interest (COI) that developed the standard for an exceptions review session. The COI will review the submitted exception and discuss with the agency contact why an exception is needed. If the discussion concludes the standard requires modification, the Community of Interest will modify the standard, perform a final review and schedule the new version of the standard for release. The modified standard will then follow the standard approval process and no exception is necessary.

Otherwise, the COI could recommend granting an exception. The Data Manager will present the COI's recommendation to the Chief Applications Officer (CAO) for review. If the CAO agrees with the COI's recommendation, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) will then review the recommendation and give the final decision. The COI and agency will then be informed of the decision. If the CAO or CIO disagrees with the COI's recommendation, the COI and the agency will be informed of the decision.



## Data Standard Exception Process

